

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 6-7, 13-14, 21, 24-28, and 32, have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,869,135, Vaeth et al. Claims 4, 9 and 29-30 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,869,135, Vaeth et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,291,072, Kimoto et al.

The Examiner has indicated that Claim 2 has been deemed allowable over the prior art of record. Claims 5, 8, 10-12, 15, 20, 16-23 and 31 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The claims have been amended such that they are all ultimately dependent on the allowable base claim, specifically, claim 2.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that the amended claims and the claims dependent there from are in proper form. The Applicants respectfully contend that Vaeth et al. '135 does not anticipate the claimed invention under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). The Applicants also contend that the teachings of Vaeth et al. '135 in view of Kimoto et al. '072 do not render the claimed invention obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Thus, claims 1-32 are considered to be patently distinguishable over the prior art of record.

In view of the foregoing comments, it is believed that the amended claims are in proper form and thus places the application into condition for allowance and an early indication of the same is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Arlene J. Powers', is written over a horizontal line.

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